

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A request for quote (RFQ) engine, comprising:

5 a data and metrics designer operable to generate, in response to input from a user, a data and metrics model for an RFQ template using a data and metrics meta-model;

a state transition designer operable to generate, in response to input from the user, a state transition model for the RFQ template using a state transition meta-model;

10 a workflow designer operable to generate, in response to input from the user, a user interface workflow for the RFQ template using a workflow meta-model; and

15 an execution engine operable to execute the RFQ template comprising the data and metrics model generated by the data and metrics designer, the state transition model generated by the state transition designer, and the user interface workflow generated by the workflow designer, the RFQ template being executed to generate an RFQ.

20 2. The RFQ engine of Claim 1, wherein the data and metrics model defines data to be collected in association with the RFQ generated by the execution engine.

3. The RFQ engine of Claim 2, wherein the data is collected from an entity originating the RFQ and one or more entities responding to the RFQ.

25 4. The RFQ engine of Claim 2, wherein the data and metrics model defines one or more metrics used to evaluate at least a portion of the collected data.

30 5. The RFQ engine of Claim 1, wherein the state transition model defines a sequence of steps performed in association with the generation of the RFQ by an originating entity and a response to the generated RFQ by one or more responding entities.

6. The RFQ engine of Claim 5, wherein the state transition model defines a series of steps performed during a negotiation between the originating entity and the responding entities.

5 7. The RFQ engine of Claim 1, wherein the user interface workflow defines a sequence of user interfaces presented to one or more entities in association with the generation of and response to the RFQ.

10 8. The RFQ engine of Claim 1, wherein the execution engine is further operable to:

receive a request from the user to generate an RFQ;
identify one or more RFQ templates that may be used to generate the RFQ;
receive a selection of an RFQ template from the user; and
execute the selected RFQ template in response to the selection.

15 9. The RFQ engine of Claim 8, wherein executing the selected RFQ template initiates the communication of one or more user interfaces to the user that allow to user to input information to generate the RFQ, the one or more user interfaces defined in the user interface workflow associated with the selected RFQ
20 template.

10. A method for generating a request for quote (RFQ), comprising:
using a data and metrics designer, generating a data and metrics model for an
RFQ template using a data and metrics meta-model and input from a user;
using a state transition designer, generating a state transition model for the
5 RFQ template using a state transition meta-model and input from the user;
using a workflow designer, generating a user interface workflow for the RFQ
template using a workflow meta-model and input from the user; and
using an execution engine, executing the RFQ template comprising the data
and metrics model generated by the data and metrics designer, the state transition
10 model generated by the state transition designer, and the user interface workflow
generated by the workflow designer, the RFQ template being executed to generate an
RFQ.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein the data and metrics model defines
15 data to be collected in association with the RFQ generated by the execution engine.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein the data is collected from an entity
originating the RFQ and one or more entities responding to the RFQ.

13. The method of Claim 11, wherein the data and metrics model defines
20 one or more metrics used to evaluate at least a portion of the collected data.

14. The method of Claim 10, wherein the state transition model defines a
sequence of steps performed in association with the generation of the RFQ by an
25 originating entity and a response to the generated RFQ by one or more responding
entities.

15. The method of Claim 14, wherein the state transition model defines a
series of steps performed during a negotiation between the originating entity and the
30 responding entities.

16. The method of Claim 10, wherein the user interface workflow defines a sequence of user interfaces presented to one or more entities in association with the generation of and response to the RFQ.

5 17. The method of Claim 10, further comprising:
receiving a request from the user to generate an RFQ;
identifying one or more RFQ templates that may be used to generate the RFQ;
receiving a selection of an RFQ template from the user; and
executing the selected RFQ template in response to the selection.

10 18. The method of Claim 17, wherein executing the selected RFQ template initiates the communication of one or more user interfaces to the user that allow to user to input information to generate the RFQ, the one or more user interfaces defined in the user interface workflow associated with the selected RFQ template.

15

19. Software for generating a request for quote (RFQ), the software embodied in a computer-readable medium and, when executed, operable to:

generate a data and metrics model for an RFQ template using a data and metrics meta-model and input from a user;

5 generate a state transition model for the RFQ template using a state transition meta-model and input from the user;

generate a user interface workflow for the RFQ template using a workflow meta-model and input from the user; and

10 execute the RFQ template comprising the data and metrics model generated by the data and metrics designer, the state transition model generated by the state transition designer, and the user interface workflow generated by the workflow designer, the RFQ template being executed to generate an RFQ.

15 20. The software of Claim 19, wherein the data and metrics model defines data to be collected in association with the generated RFQ.

21. The software of Claim 20, wherein the data is collected from an entity originating the RFQ and one or more entities responding to the RFQ.

20 22. The software of Claim 20, wherein the data and metrics model defines one or more metrics used to evaluate at least a portion of the collected data.

25 23. The software of Claim 19, wherein the state transition model defines a sequence of steps performed in association with the generation of the RFQ by an originating entity and a response to the generated RFQ by one or more responding entities.

30 24. The software of Claim 23, wherein the state transition model defines a series of steps performed during a negotiation between the originating entity and the responding entities.

25. The software of Claim 19, wherein the user interface workflow defines a sequence of user interfaces presented to one or more entities in association with the generation of and response to the RFQ.

5 26. The software of Claim 19, further operable to:
receive a request from the user to generate an RFQ;
identify one or more RFQ templates that may be used to generate the RFQ;
receive a selection of an RFQ template from the user; and
execute the selected RFQ template in response to the selection.

10 27. The software of Claim 26, wherein executing the selected RFQ
template initiates the communication of one or more user interfaces to the user that
allow to user to input information to generate the RFQ, the one or more user
15 interfaces defined in the user interface workflow associated with the selected RFQ
template.

28. A system for generating a request for quote (RFQ), comprising:

means for generating a data and metrics model for an RFQ template using a data and metrics meta-model and input from a user;

5 means for generating a state transition model for the RFQ template using a state transition meta-model and input from the user;

means for generating a user interface workflow for the RFQ template using a workflow meta-model and input from the user; and

10 means for executing the RFQ template comprising the data and metrics model generated by the data and metrics designer, the state transition model generated by the state transition designer, and the user interface workflow generated by the workflow designer, the RFQ template being executed to generate an RFQ.

29. A request for quote (RFQ) engine, comprising:

a data and metrics designer operable to generate, in response to input from an entity originating an RFQ, a data and metrics model for an RFQ template using a data and metrics meta-model;

5 a state transition designer operable to generate, in response to input from the originating entity, a state transition model for the RFQ template using a state transition meta-model;

10 a workflow designer operable to generate, in response to input from the originating entity, a user interface workflow for the RFQ template using a workflow meta-model; and

15 an execution engine operable to execute the RFQ template comprising the data and metrics model generated by the data and metrics designer, the state transition model generated by the state transition designer, and the user interface workflow generated by the workflow designer, the RFQ template being executed to generate the RFQ;

the data and metrics model defining data to be collected from the originating entity and one or more entities responding to the RFQ, the data and metrics model further defining one or more metrics used to evaluate at least a portion of the collected data;

20 the state transition model defining a sequence of steps performed during a negotiation between the originating entity and the responding entities relating to the RFQ;

25 the user interface workflow defining a sequence of user interfaces presented to the originating and responding entities in association with the generation of and response to the RFQ.

30. A method for generating a request for quote (RFQ), comprising:

using a data and metrics designer, generating a data and metrics model for an RFQ template using a data and metrics meta-model and input from an entity originating an RFQ;

5 using a state transition designer, generating a state transition model for the RFQ template using a state transition meta-model and input from the originating entity;

using a workflow designer, generating a user interface workflow for the RFQ template using a workflow meta-model and input from the originating entity; and

10 using an execution engine, executing the RFQ template comprising the data and metrics model generated by the data and metrics designer, the state transition model generated by the state transition designer, and the user interface workflow generated by the workflow designer, the RFQ template being executed to generate an RFQ;

15 the data and metrics model defining data to be collected from the originating entity and one or more entities responding to the RFQ, the data and metrics model further defining one or more metrics used to evaluate at least a portion of the collected data;

20 the state transition model defining a sequence of steps performed during a negotiation between the originating entity and the responding entities relating to the RFQ;

the user interface workflow defining a sequence of user interfaces presented to the originating and responding entities in association with the generation of and response to the RFQ.

25

31. Software for generating a request for quote (RFQ), the software embodied in a computer-readable medium and, when executed, operable to:

generate a data and metrics model for an RFQ template using a data and metrics meta-model and input from an entity originating an RFQ;

5 generate a state transition model for the RFQ template using a state transition meta-model and input from the originating entity;

generate a user interface workflow for the RFQ template using a workflow meta-model and input from the originating entity; and

10 execute the RFQ template comprising the data and metrics model generated by the data and metrics designer, the state transition model generated by the state transition designer, and the user interface workflow generated by the workflow designer, the RFQ template being executed to generate an RFQ;

15 the data and metrics model defining data to be collected from the originating entity and one or more entities responding to the RFQ, the data and metrics model further defining one or more metrics used to evaluate at least a portion of the collected data;

the state transition model defining a sequence of steps performed during a negotiation between the originating entity and the responding entities relating to the RFQ;

20 the user interface workflow defining a sequence of user interfaces presented to the originating and responding entities in association with the generation of and response to the RFQ.